

Valentine's Day Stickers! ★ Delicious Sprinkles Recipes

January/February 2016

American Girl

americangirlmagazine.com

15 ways
to warm up

* Make pop-up
valentines

* **Quiz:** How
daring are you?

Wow!
Meet a seriously
inspiring runner



ADVERTISEMENT

Maryellen

LARKIN™

*My year is 1954.
It's my time to stand
out from the crowd.*

Discover a friend from
the '50s who believes
the sky's the limit!



Visit an American Girl store near you, call **800-845-0005**, or go to **americangirl.com**.

Must be at least 18 years of age to purchase online.



EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
Jean McKenzie

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR
Jodi Goldberg
EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Barbara E. Stretchberry

SENIOR EDITOR
Mary Richards Beaumont
ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Melissa Seymour

LIFESTYLE EDITOR
Andrea Debbink
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR
Darcie Johnston

SENIOR ART DIRECTOR
Riley Wilkinson

ART DIRECTORS
Dan Nordskog, Gretchen Becker, Jessica Meihack
CONTRIBUTING ART DIRECTOR
Jessica Rogers

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Paula Moon

MASTER GRAPHIC ARTIST
Lisa Bunescu

SENIOR GRAPHIC ARTIST
Kristi Tabrizi

CONTRIBUTING WRITER
Kitson Jazyuka

MARKETING MANAGER
D'Ann Jackson

SENIOR CIRCULATION COORDINATOR
Heather Hempel Gomez

SPECIAL THANKS TO
Patti Kelley Criswell, Meagan Eggers,
Joe Hinrichs, Kyla Newton
Jolene Schulz, Mark Speltz,
Ann Marie Yeap

Cover Credits: Wardrobe styling: Aubre Andrus, Mary Richards Beaumont.
Hair: Susie Lee.

American Girl® (ISSN 1062-7812, Canadian Sales Agreement Number 40635507) is published bimonthly by American Girl Publishing, 8400 Fairway Place, Middleton WI 53562. Copyright © 2016 American Girl. All rights reserved. Customer Service: 800-234-1278. Subscriber: Send change of address information six weeks before moving to American Girl, PO Box 5533, Harlan IA 51593-1035. Send old address label (recent mailing label is best), new address, and new telephone number, or call 800-234-1278. Editorial Offices: American Girl, Editorial Department, 8400 Fairway Place, Middleton WI 53562. American Girl Publishing cannot accept liability for loss or damage of photographs or other materials. Unsolicited materials will be returned only if accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. All submissions received by American Girl become the sole property of American Girl Publishing and may be used by American Girl Publishing or its parent or affiliated companies without compensation or acknowledgment. American Girl®, Follow Your Inner Star®, Girls Express®, and According to Aggie® are trademarks owned by American Girl. American Girl trademarks cannot be used without the express written consent of American Girl.

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation of American Girl, Publication No. 1062-7812, Filing date: 10/01/15, Issue frequency: Bimonthly. No. issues published annually: 6. Annual subscription price: \$24.95. Owner: Mattel. Headquarters: 333 Continental Blvd., El Segundo CA 90245. Editor: Barbara Stretchberry. Periodicals postage paid at Madison WI and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to American Girl, PO Box 5533, Harlan IA 51593-1035.

	Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months	Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date
A. Total number of copies (Net press run)	491,983	451,356
B. Paid circulation		
1. Paid/requested circ. mail subscriptions stated on Form 3541	344,763	321,308
2. Paid in-county subscriptions	0	0
3. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, counter sales, and other non-USPS paid distribution	29,487	24,429
4. Other classes mailed through USPS	0	0
C. Total paid distribution	374,250	345,737
D. Free distribution		
1. Outside-county stated on Form 3541	516	673
2. In-county stated on Form 3541	521	627
3. Other classes mailed through USPS	0	0
4. Free distribution outside mail	5,934	3,946
E. Total free distribution	6,971	5,246
F. Total distribution	381,221	350,983
G. Copies not distributed	110,762	100,373
H. Total	491,983	451,356
I. Percent paid	98.17%	98.51%



Winner of a
Parents' Choice
Silver Award,
2015



American Girl

Printed in the USA on paper containing at least 10% post-consumer waste.
Recycle me or pass me on to a friend.



10% post-consumer waste

Contents

Volume 24, Number 1

Follow Your Inner Star™

Girls Express 2

Contest 8
Perfect Pillows

Speak Up! 10
Zzzz

According to Aggie 12
Snow Day

I'm Freaking Out! 14

Sprinkles 16

Sprinkles,
page 16



Warm It Up! 22

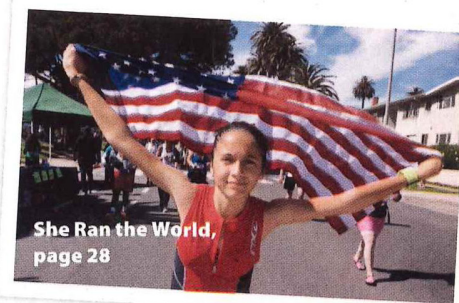
Pop-Up Valentines 24

Daredevil Level,
page 26



Daredevil Level 26

She Ran the World 28



She Ran the World,
page 28

Taken by Surprise 32

Critter Crazy 40

Mini Mag 41

Poster 43

Help! 45

Behind the Scenes 48

BE MY VALENTINE

Plus AG's Valentine
Stickers!



Safety first!

Some of our projects and activities require an adult's help.

When you see this symbol, be sure to ask an adult to work with you.

Girls™

E X P R E S S

Glitter Glow

Make a sparkly light that shines bright!



Ask a parent about the best place to do this craft, and be sure to cover your work space.



Styling: Melissa Seymour

Use a sponge brush to cover the inside of a clear jar with decoupage glue. Use enough glue on the brush to create a thin layer while spreading it across the inside

of the jar. Pour glitter into the jar and then put the lid back on tight. Shake the jar so the glitter coats the inside. Remove the lid and wait at least an hour for the jar to dry.

Shake out leftover glitter. Place an LED light inside the jar, and enjoy the sparkly light!

True Story

All of Crystal's hard work is paying off—she might have a shot at playing on the Olympic table tennis team!

Dear American Girl,

Ping-Pong is pretty much my life. I have been training and playing since I was five years old. I play seven days a week and compete all over the world, like in Japan, China, Austria, and Barbados. In 2014, I was the youngest person ever to make the USA National Women's Team. Winning makes me feel happy inside, but I don't celebrate too much. I just focus on working harder.

In Ping-Pong, you fight for each point. Playing at this level is super fast, with lots of small strokes and spin on the ball. I serve, hit, and smash the ball and bounce on my toes. Even when you're losing, you don't give up. It's a mental game, like with school. I study every day to get good grades. Someday, I hope to go to medical school.

But back to Ping-Pong. This year there's a chance I'll make the national table tennis team that will represent the United States at the Olympics. Even if I don't make it, I'll keep trying for the next Games. But if I do make the team, it will be a big deal. It's been my dream for a long time. I mean, it's the Olympics!

Sincerely,

Crystal W.

Age 13, Maryland



AG Poll

Answer these questions, and then turn the page to see how your answers compare to those of other AG readers.

What would you do on your dream day?

- * Travel to another country
- * Meet your favorite celebrity
- * Go on a shopping spree
- * Travel back in time

What's the best part of your bedroom?

- * Your bed
- * Your desk
- * Your closet
- * Your reading nook

Who inspires you?

- * A family member
- * A celebrity
- * A fictional character
- * A friend

What would you do on your dream day?

32%

Go on a shopping spree

25%

Travel back in time



25%

Meet your favorite celebrity

18%

Travel to another country

What's the best part of your bedroom?

63%

Your bed

12%

Your closet



15%

Your reading nook

10%

Your desk



Who inspires you?

40%

A family member

19%

A celebrity

25%

A friend

16%

A fictional character

To answer our weekly poll question, go to
americangirl.com/playmagazine

Look Out!

Which sled is most like your personality?

1. What might be found in your locker?

- a. A photo of you and your best friends.
- b. Tickets to the new action movie that comes out this weekend!
- c. Cute decor in all your favorite colors.

3. Which comforter do you like best?



2. Which class project would you enjoy most?

- a. Doing a group presentation about a famous woman leader.
- b. Creating a giant volcano for the science fair.
- c. Making a poster about a book you read.

4. Which pet would you like to have?

- a. A dog that follows you everywhere you go.
- b. A horse you can ride down twisty trails.
- c. A kitten that will curl up with you while you think.

5. Which shirt do you like better?



Answers

Mostly a's

YOU'RE A TOBOGGAN!

You are happiest when you're hanging out and being silly with your buddies. With them by your side, you're sure to have a blast.

Mostly b's

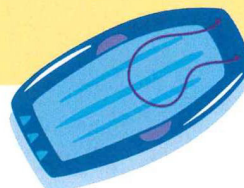
YOU'RE A RACER!

You love adventure and are always up for a challenge. Your fun-loving personality puts those around you in a great mood.

Mostly c's

YOU'RE A SAUCER!

You know who you are. You have no problem being yourself around others, and you know your style. Keep being you!





Shining Star

A few years ago, when 11-year-old Kate K. and her older brother Justin read an article about people saving jaguars in South America, the siblings took action. They started raising money for big cat conservation by recycling aluminum cans.

"We make posters," Kate says. "Then we set up food and drinks in our driveway." Neighbors and friends come by to donate bags of cans and get refreshments. Then Kate and her brother load up their dad's car and head to their local recycling center. There, they trade in the cans for 55 cents per pound. Since they started, Kate and Justin have donated more than \$5,000 to

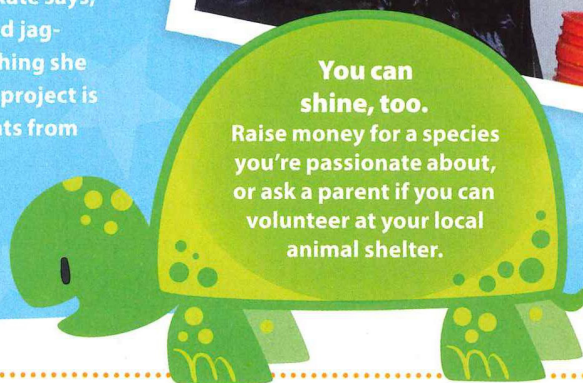
an organization that protects the world's wild cats. Kate and her brother have visited New York three times to make their donations and meet the conservationists. The organization named Kate and Justin "junior ambassadors" for their hard work.

"There are a lot of things to love about big cats," Kate says, "like tigers' stripes and jaguars' spots." But the thing she loves most about this project is helping to keep big cats from becoming extinct.



You can shine, too.

Raise money for a species you're passionate about, or ask a parent if you can volunteer at your local animal shelter.



Let's Do This!

Use these tips to set a goal you can accomplish.

What do you want to improve on? Make a list. Write down the things you'd like to get better at, and circle one that really stands out.

- stay more organized.
- walk Patches more.
- get better at gymnastics.
- speak up in class.
- take more breaks from technology.

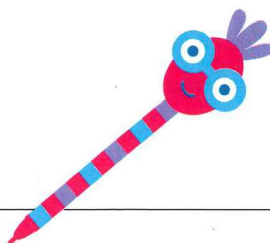
Set a realistic time line. If you want to get better at gymnastics, it's going to take time. Break your goal into little chunks.

Each week have a check-in with yourself. How have you been doing? Write down your progress in a journal, and focus on the positives! If you're still not there, you might need to adjust your time line or focus on other parts of your goal.

When you start to make some progress; even a little bit—be proud of yourself!



- stay after practice to work on handstands with Mara.
- ask coach to give me some pointers on the balance beam.
- spend time stretching instead of messing around before warm ups.
- watch gymnasts compete on TV for inspiration!



Mix It Up!

Create your own trail mix to eat on the go.

Pick one or two items from each section to make a delicious trail mix! Then mix it up!

NUTS



peanuts



cashews



almonds



pecans

DRIED FRUIT



cranberries



blueberries



raisins



banana chips



cherries

SEEDS



sunflower seeds



pumpkin seeds



flax seeds

BONUS TREAT (CHOOSE JUST ONE)



chocolate chips



peanut butter chips



marshmallows



pretzels

Meet a Reader's Pet

Cecilia H.

Age 10, Ohio

Describe the day you got your pet:

I wanted a guinea pig so much. I read every guinea pig book in the library and hoped I could persuade my parents. On Christmas Eve, my dad took me to the pet store and let me pick one out. I was so surprised and grateful.

How would you describe your pet in three words?

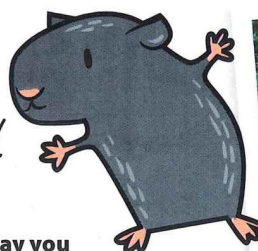
Squeaky, Adorable, Lovable.

A time when your pet was funny:

When I set him down, he waddles over to his cage. One time, my brothers and I timed how long it took Pepper to run from where we set him down to his cage. It only took him 2.5 seconds!

How do you play with Pepper?

I let Pepper run around my room in his exercise ball. When it's sunny outside, we take him out and let him roam around in the grass. He loves it!



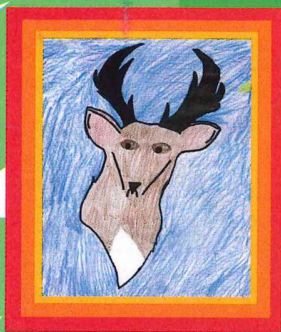
This is me and Pepper. I take care of him, play with him every day, and cuddle him all the time. I always tell him secrets, and he's always there for me.



My guinea pig is black, so I named him Pepper. Sometimes he squeals really loud—it's so funny!

AG Art Gallery

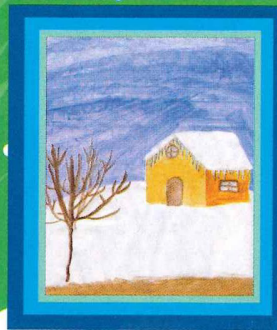
These girls created wonderful wintry scenes.



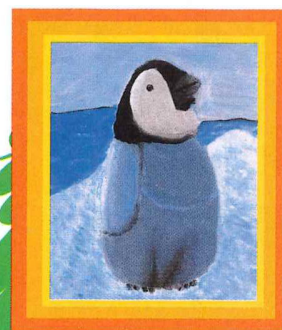
Raena H.
Age 9, Pennsylvania



Francesca K.
Age 11, Texas



Louise A.
Age 13, New Jersey



Ella S.
Age 12, Maine

Write to Us!

Be sure to include your

- * First and last name
- * Address and phone number
- * Birth date, including year
- * School photo or other portrait
- * Parent's signature

Send us a cool envelope!

Print our address neatly on the front and your return address and the section of the magazine you're writing to on the back.

We can't print every letter, but we read everything you send to us. Hope to hear from you soon! ★



Envelope art by
Kahli H.
Age 9, North Carolina

Perfect Pillows

These girls sent in their pillow drawings, and we turned them into real pillows!

You're Owl Sleepy!



Brielle B.
Age 11, Pennsylvania



Sweet Slumber



Katherine L.
Age 11, Washington



Doll Dreams



Sally S.
Age 11, Florida



Cat Nap



Grayson M.
Age 12, Ohio

Hummingbird Hibernation



Andrea S.
Age 11, Puerto Rico

A Whale of a Pillow



Isabell S.
Age 12, South Dakota

Plush Petals



Audrey S.
Age 12, Wisconsin

Paisley Pillow



Rhea C.
Age 13, Tennessee

New Contest: Sunglasses

Design a pair of sweet sunglasses! Do your shades have stripes or another cool pattern? Are they decorated with things you love, like dinosaurs or watermelon? We can't wait to see what you come up with! To send us your original sunglasses design, follow the instructions on page 7.

Postmark deadline: February 10, 2016. Winners will appear in the July/August 2016 issue. Sorry—we can't return entries. ★



* Night owl 53%

* A nightgown or a nightshirt **17%**

The next popular time was 8:00 p.m.



68%

of you remember
your dreams

32%

of you do not

**Most of your dreams
are...**

- * weird. **45%**
- * awesome. **20%**
- * scary. **16%**
- * happy. **10%**
- * funny. **9%**

**Most of you have
had dreams where
you could fly!**

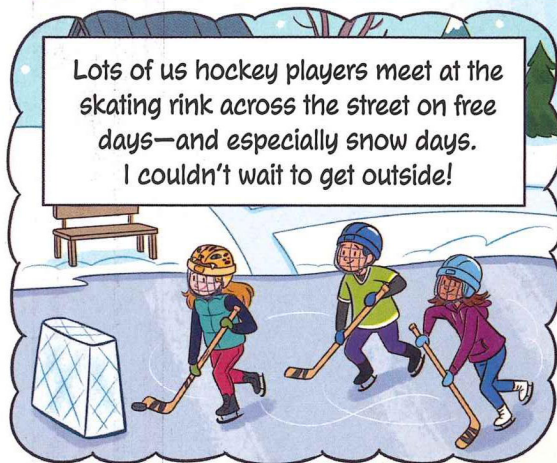
**How do you
usually wake up?**

- * You just wake up **44%**
- * A family member wakes you **31%**
- * An alarm clock **10%**
- * An alarm on a device **8%**
- * A pet wakes you **7%**

Coming Up: Camp

1. Have you ever been to camp?
YES or NO
2. If yes, which type of camp was it?
 - a. Day camp
 - b. Sleep-away camp
3. Did you get homesick?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. A little bit, but I was OK
4. Which type of camp do you attend?
 - a. Music or art camp
 - b. Sports camp
 - c. Religious camp
 - d. Outdoor adventure camp
 - e. Drama or theater camp
 - f. Horseback-riding camp
 - g. Other (please list)
5. How many new friends did you make?
 - a. One
 - b. Two
 - c. Three or more
 - d. I didn't make any new friends
 - e. I went to camp with a friend I already knew
6. What would the name of your summer camp be?
Make one up!

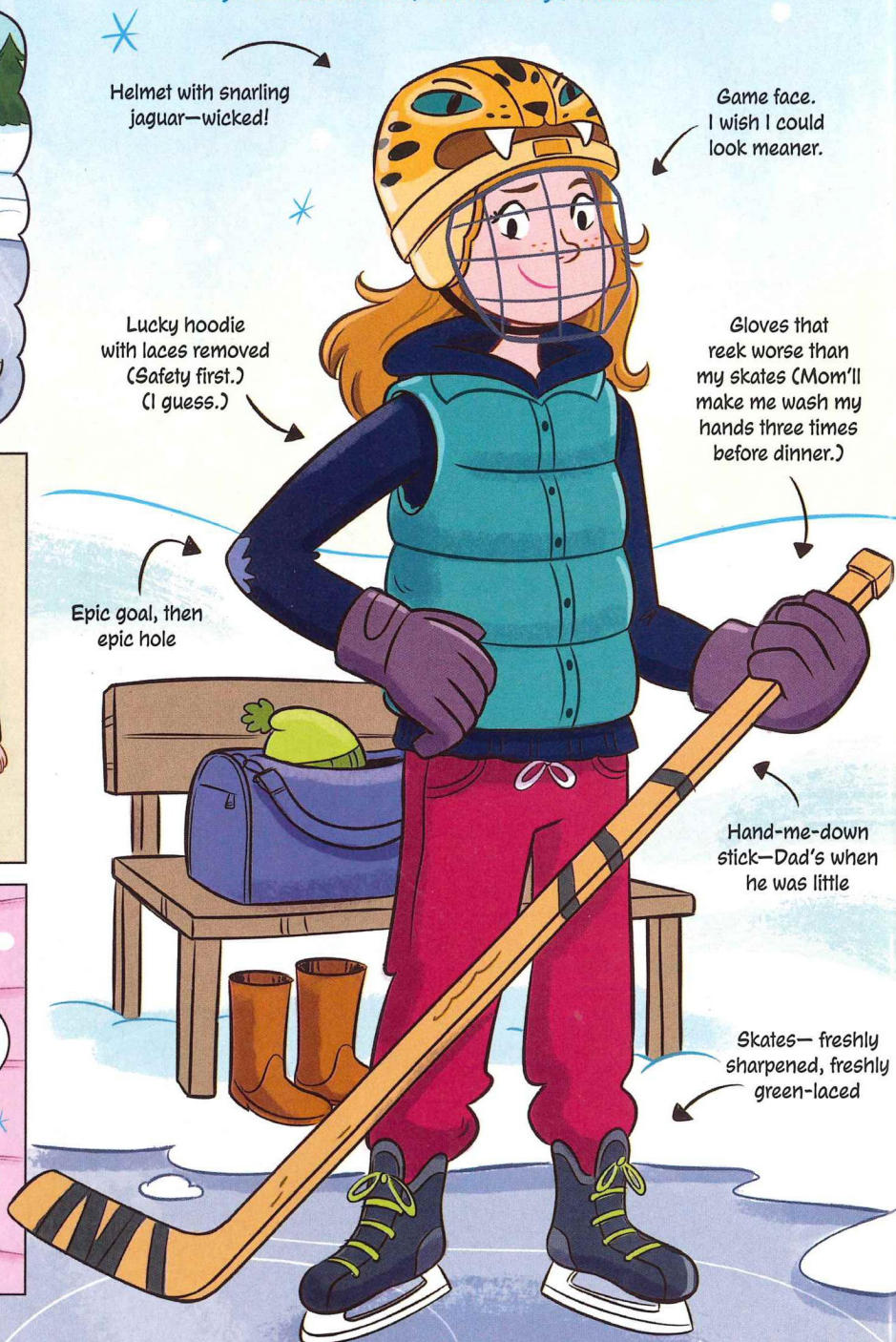
Send your answers to the address on page 7, along with your first and last name, address, school or portrait-style photo, and birth date. Postmark deadline: February 10, 2016. Some answers will appear in the July/August 2016 issue. ★

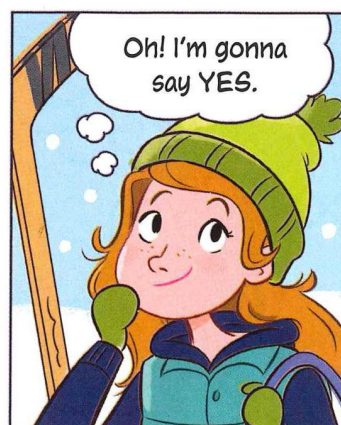


According to Aggie™

Snow Day

Created by
Mary Richards Beaumont, Dan Nordskog & Genevieve Kote





"I'm going through a rough time. I go crazy one minute and am calm the next, and then I'm yelling at a boy on the bus. What is wrong with me??"

-Scared and Worried

"I think I have a feeling disorder because I overreact to everything."

-Always Exploding

"I cry a lot for NO reason. MY MOM says I'm going through hormone changes. I'm very scared. Is this normal?"

-Confused

I'M FREAKING OUT!

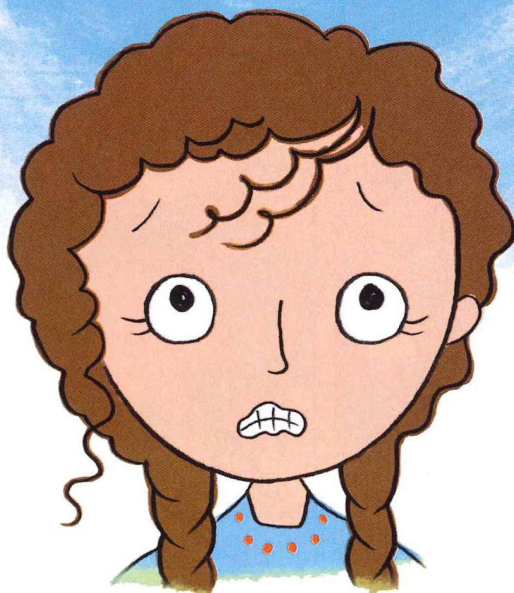
Don't worry—major mood swings are a perfectly normal part of growing up, and you can handle them.

"MY mood has gone wild. Whether I'm feeling angry, sad, frustrated, or lonely, I cry. I know I get enough sleep. What else can I do?"

-Crying a River

"I'm 10, and growing up is pretty hard. I have always been a bit emotional, but this is nuts."

-Losing It



You're growing up. That means you're probably experiencing lots of changes, all at once. Your body is changing. It might even seem as if your entire self is changing—how you feel, how you react, how you deal with everyday things. It can be confusing. It can even be scary.

But the truth is, it happens to every girl. And it's good! Growing up means that you can do more, learn more, and start to make your mark on the

world. In order for that to happen, your body produces chemicals called *hormones* that help both body and mind grow. Hormone levels change constantly, rising and falling. This shifting is needed for your body's development, but it's partly to blame for intense emotions, surprising reactions, and mood swings.

Because of the way your brain develops, it is somewhat ruled by emotion now and through your teen years. As a result, growing up can seem like **an emotional roller coaster!** Here are a few things you can do to get a grip on your emotions and make the ride smoother.

*** Take good care of yourself.** If you eat right, sleep enough, and get good exercise, your brain will be much more able to cope with stress.

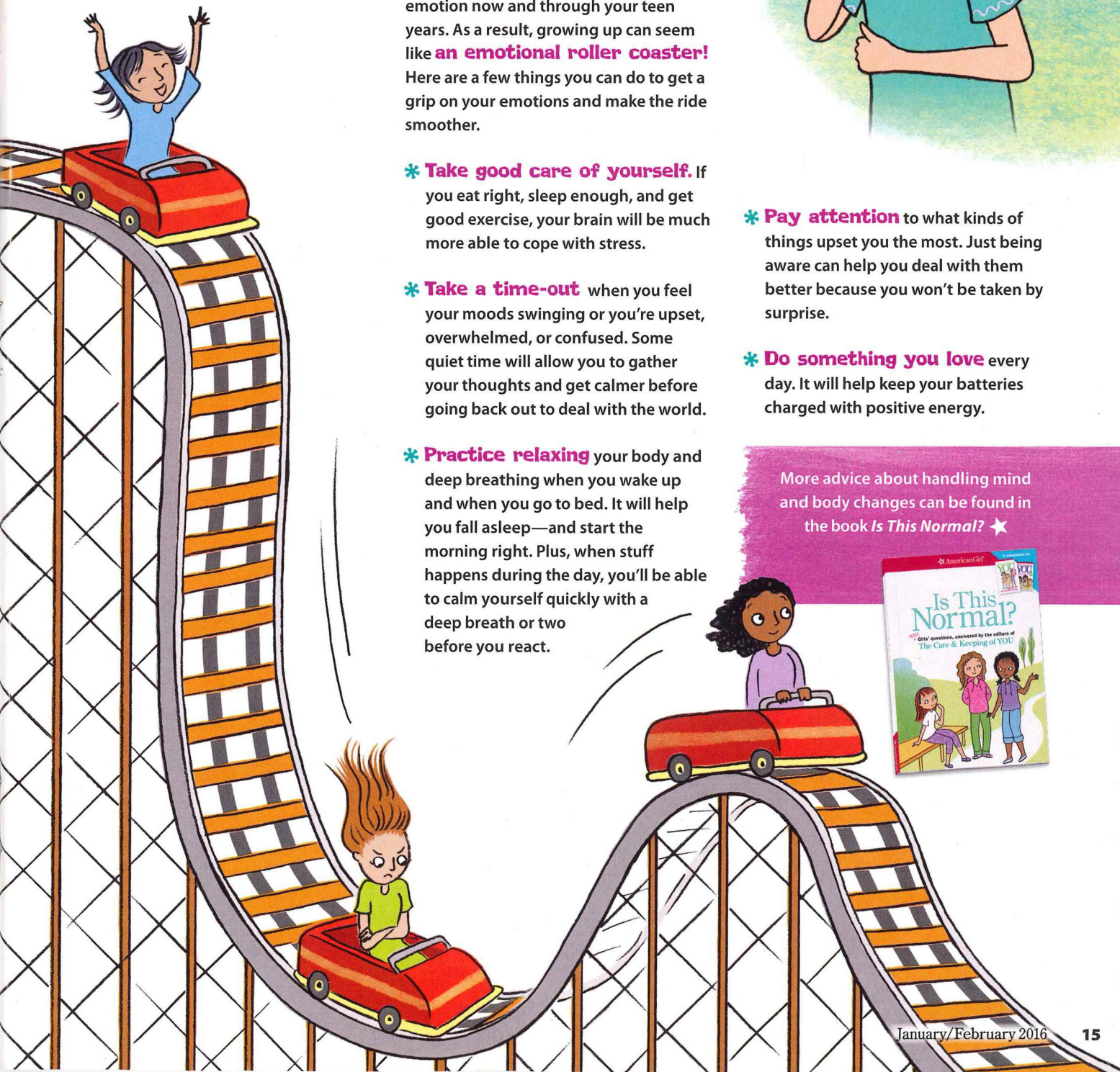
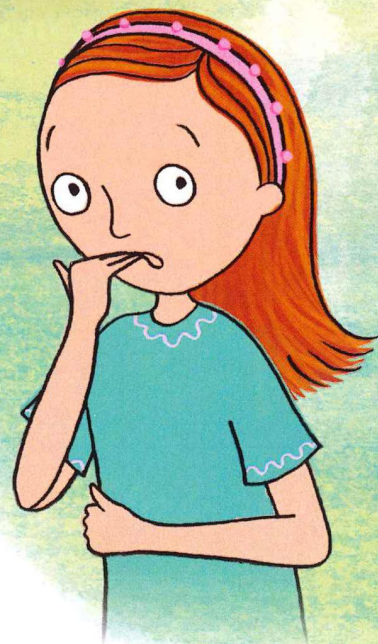
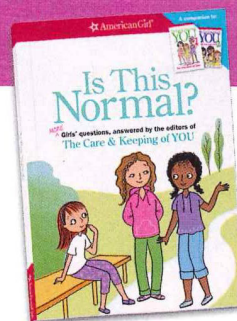
*** Take a time-out** when you feel your moods swinging or you're upset, overwhelmed, or confused. Some quiet time will allow you to gather your thoughts and get calmer before going back out to deal with the world.

*** Practice relaxing** your body and deep breathing when you wake up and when you go to bed. It will help you fall asleep—and start the morning right. Plus, when stuff happens during the day, you'll be able to calm yourself quickly with a deep breath or two before you react.

*** Pay attention** to what kinds of things upset you the most. Just being aware can help you deal with them better because you won't be taken by surprise.

*** Do something you love** every day. It will help keep your batteries charged with positive energy.

More advice about handling mind and body changes can be found in the book *Is This Normal?* ★



Decorator's Dictionary

Candy sprinkles come in many shapes, sizes, and colors. Experiment with different types for different recipes.

SPARKLING
SUGAR

CANDY
PEARLS

JIMMIES

EDIBLE
GLITTER

NONPAREILS

QUINS

Sprinkles

Turn any sweet into
a party treat with
candy sprinkles!



Pearl Parfait

Candy pearls are a sweet way to dress up dessert. Layer crushed cookies and pudding in a glass. Top with whipped cream, candy pearls, and sparkling sugar.

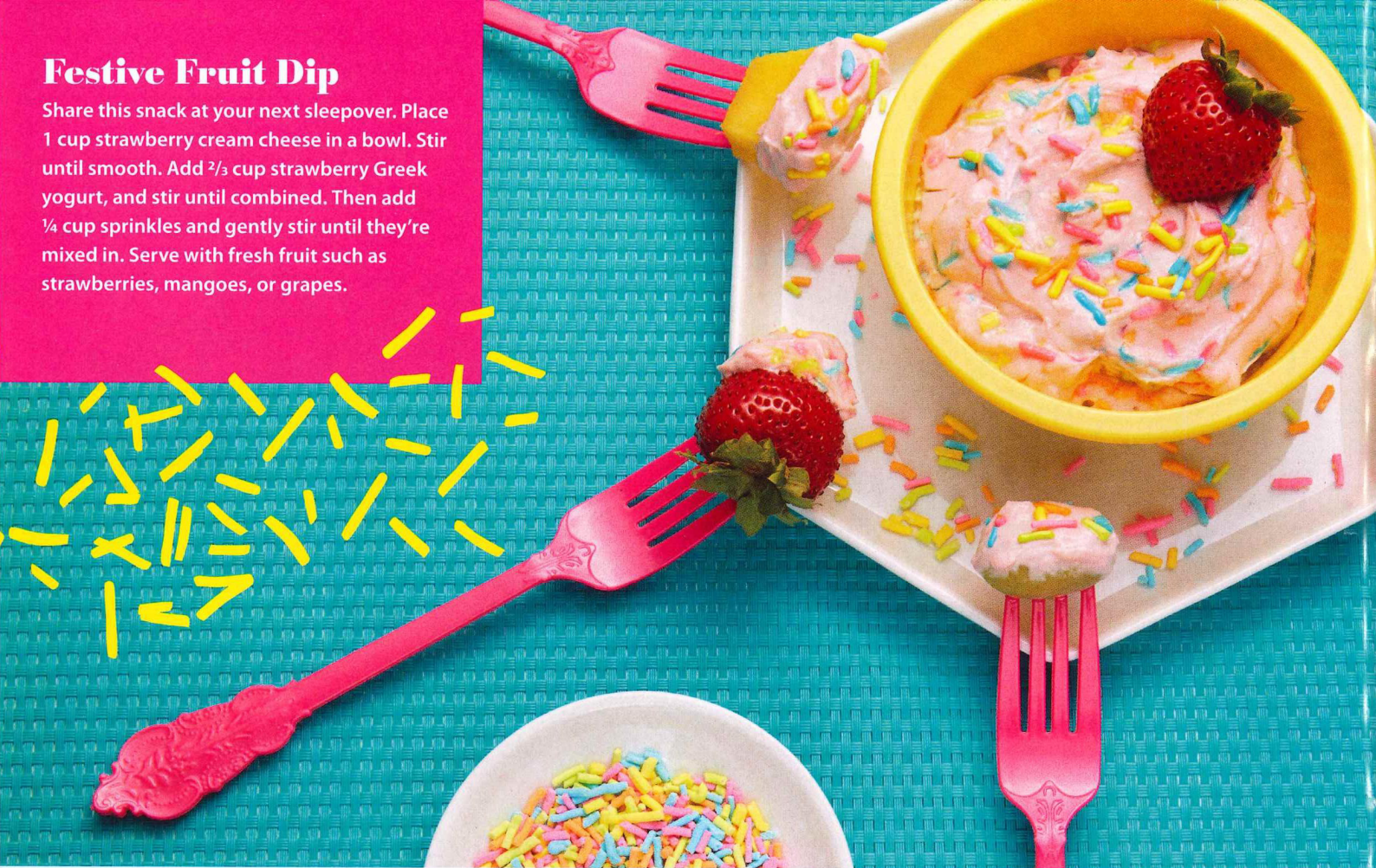


Cake Shake

 Shake it up with sprinkles! First, decorate some drinking glasses. Dip a new, clean paintbrush into a small amount of honey and “paint” the rims of the glasses. Turn each glass upside down in a small dish of sprinkles, and then right-side up again. Next, make the shake! Place 1 cup milk, 1½ cups vanilla ice cream, and ¼ cup white cake mix (dry) in a blender. Ask an adult to blend on high for about one minute. Pour into the glasses, and top with whipped cream and more candy sprinkles.

Festive Fruit Dip

Share this snack at your next sleepover. Place 1 cup strawberry cream cheese in a bowl. Stir until smooth. Add $\frac{2}{3}$ cup strawberry Greek yogurt, and stir until combined. Then add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sprinkles and gently stir until they're mixed in. Serve with fresh fruit such as strawberries, mangoes, or grapes.



Custom Colored Sugar

Add a splash of color to sugar. Start with $\frac{1}{3}$ cup crystal sugar (granulated sugar with larger grains) in a small bowl. Add 1 to 2 drops of food coloring. (Use more for brighter colors.) Stir until all the color is mixed into the sugar. Spread on wax paper, and let dry overnight.





Party Pops

Try these sprinkles on a stick! First, cover your work surface with wax paper. Heat 1 cup chocolate chips or candy melts in a microwave on high for 30 seconds and stir. Continue heating for 30 seconds at a time and stirring until the candy is melted. Place a food-safe stick or drinking straw in one end of a marshmallow. Dip the marshmallow halfway into the melted candy. Next, hold the marshmallow over a disposable plate and coat with candy sprinkles. Place on a sheet of wax paper to let set.

Confetti Cookies

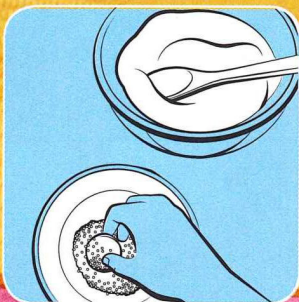
These crunchy cookies are full of color!

YOU WILL NEED

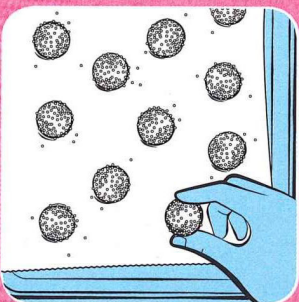
- * ½ cup butter, softened
- * 1¼ cups powdered sugar
- * 1 egg
- * 1 teaspoon baking soda
- * ½ teaspoon baking powder
- * 2 teaspoons vanilla
- * 2 cups flour
- * nonpareils



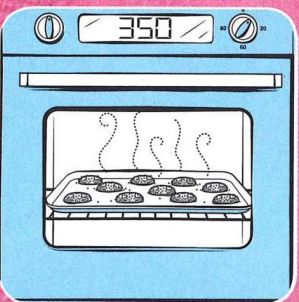
1. In a mixing bowl, stir together the butter and sugar until smooth. Add the egg and stir again. Then add baking soda, baking powder, vanilla, and flour, and stir until everything is mixed.



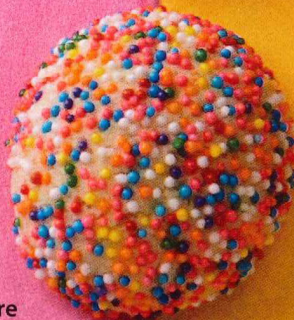
2. Pour the nonpareils into a shallow bowl. Shape the dough into 1-inch balls, and roll each one in the sprinkles.



3. Place each ball of dough on a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. The cookies should be about 2 inches apart. Place the cookies in the freezer for 30 minutes.



4.  Ask an adult to bake the cookies in a preheated 350-degree oven for 7–9 minutes. Place the cookies on a wire rack to cool completely.

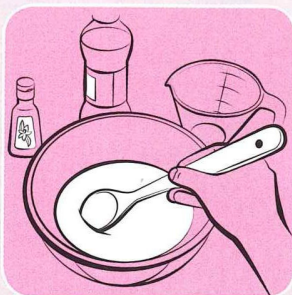


DIY Sprinkles

Make your own jimmies with this simple recipe!

YOU WILL NEED

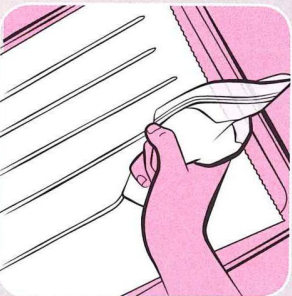
- * 2 tablespoons meringue powder
- * 2 tablespoons water
- * 1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- * ½ teaspoon salt
- * 1⅓ cup powdered sugar
- * food coloring



1. Cover a cutting board with wax paper and set aside. Stir together meringue powder, water, vanilla, and salt in a mixing bowl.



2. Add powdered sugar to the liquid ingredients, a little at a time, stirring after each addition. Stir icing until it's smooth. Add a few drops of food coloring and mix again.



3. Pour icing into a plastic sandwich bag and use scissors to cut off a tiny corner. (You can also use an icing bag with a round tip.) Squeeze thin lines of icing onto wax paper. Let dry for 24 hours.



4. After the icing has hardened, use a butter knife to cut the lines of icing into pieces. Store in an airtight container.

Don't stop with these recipes. See what else you can dress up with sprinkles—try pancakes, trail mix, oatmeal, or ice cream!

Send photos to address on page 7. ★

15 WAYS TO WARM IT UP! BEAT WINTER'S CHILLS

1. Hold your mittens or hat over a hot-air vent for a moment before putting them on.

2.  Need portable warmth? Fill an old kneesock about halfway with dry, uncooked white rice. Knot the sock tightly to close. Ask an adult to microwave the sock in 20-second bursts until it's warm. Then use the sock to warm your hands, your boots, or the back of your neck.

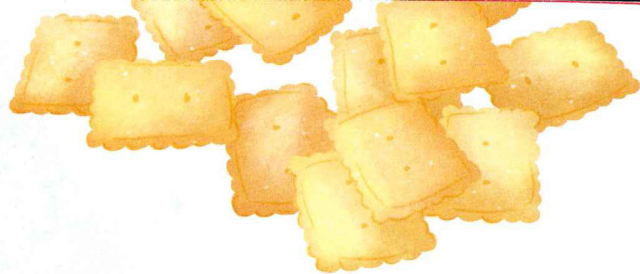
3. Make some mini marshmallows for your cocoa. Place a few regular-size marshmallows in a plastic bag. Flatten them with a rolling pin. Then use a tiny cookie cutter to make shapes.

4.  Make cozy boot cuffs from an old sweater. With a parent's permission, measure 6 inches from the cuff of each sweater arm, and cut carefully with scissors. Slide the cuffs into place so that they'll peek out from your boots.

5. One heartwarming movie, one cozy blanket, and you.

6. Summer is far away, but some summery sports work year round. Jump roping, hopscotch, and volleyball are fun in the cold!





- 7.** Spruce up your soup with something other than saltines—salted popcorn, crumbled tortilla chips, or cheesy crackers.

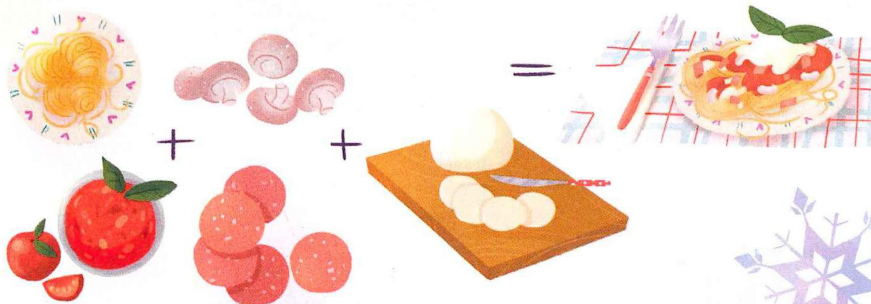


- 8.** Be a snow angel. Shoveling a neighbor's driveway will warm you up quickly.

- 9.** Become a tea drinker. Shop around for a caffeine-free flavor you'll like (such as a fruity or herbal blend), and then brew tea whenever you feel chilly. For a treat, add a teaspoon of sweetened condensed milk to your mug.



- 10.** If you're chilly in your bed, you'll have a hard time falling asleep. Put on your pj's with whatever else you need to get warm—socks, mittens, even a beanie.
- 11.**  Make Pizza Pasta! With an adult's help, prepare spaghetti with tomato sauce. Add sliced pepperoni or any other favorite pizza toppings to the sauce, and then melt mozzarella cheese over the top of each plate before serving. YUM.



- 12.** Frosty feet? Sit at the foot of your bed for a few minutes before you lie down. That way, the spot for your feet will be warm when you get in.

- 13.** Invent your own custom oatmeal mix-ins. Nuts and pancake syrup? Coconut and bananas? PB&J?

- 14.** Even if your hair is already dry, use a hair dryer to blow some warmth into it.



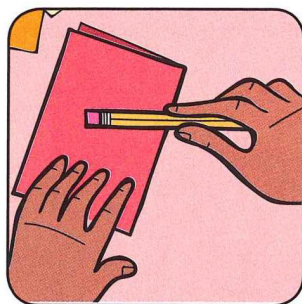
- 15.** Dance party! ★

POP-UP VALENTINES

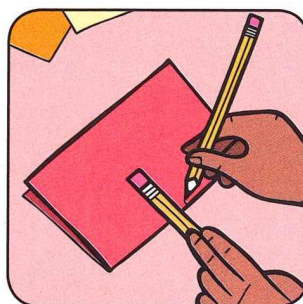
Fold, cut, glue, and decorate—give a card that you create!

YOU WILL NEED

- * card stock or scrapbook paper (2 sheets per card)
- * 2 pencils
- * scissors
- * glue stick
- * stickers



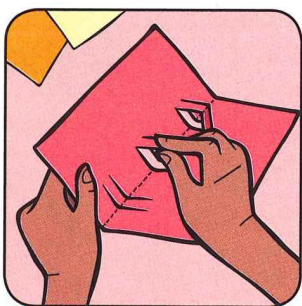
1. Fold a piece of card stock in half lengthwise. This will be the inside of your card. Use the side of a pencil to crease the folded edge.



2. Lay the pencil on the center of the fold as shown. Use the second pencil to trace a line about 2 inches long on either side.



3. Repeat step 2 on either side of the center marks, centering the pencil each time. Cut along the pencil lines.



4. Open the card and fold the strips the opposite way, as shown.



5. Fold the other sheet of card stock or paper in half. Apply glue to the back of the inside card, and attach it to the outside card.



6. Press stickers onto card stock. Cut around the stickers, leaving a border. Glue to the pop-up strips. Finish by decorating the front of the card.

Cut the inside or outside of the card smaller to make a border.

HAPPY HUGS DAY



BEST BUDS



FRIENDS 4 EVER

Make larger or smaller cards by using different paper sizes.

HAPPY

VALENTINE'S

DAY

BEE MINE

AG'S VALENTINE STICKERS

DAREDEVIL LEVEL

How adventurous are you?

Would you...

1. Volunteer to present your class project first?

Yes!
Maybe
No way

2. Run for class president?

Yes!
Maybe
No way



3. Travel to a country where everyone speaks another language?

Yes!
Maybe
No way

4. Ride the biggest roller coaster in the theme park?

Yes!
Maybe
No way

5. Try out for the solo in your school choir?

Yes!
Maybe
No way

6. Swim in a shark tank?

Yes!
Maybe
No way

7. Ask for your favorite athlete's autograph?

Yes!
Maybe
No way

8. Go sky diving?

Yes!
Maybe
No way

9. Spend a night in a haunted house?

Yes!
Maybe
No way

10. Jump into ice water to raise money for a good cause?

Yes!
Maybe
No way

11. Wear a really silly shirt for a whole day?

Yes!
Maybe
No way



ADVENTURE METER

Mostly Red

Whoa—daring is your middle name! Your friends love that you're up for any kind of adventure. In new situations you're usually the first to take the plunge. You almost always say yes when adventure is in question. Just remember—there's a line between being daring and being unsafe.

Mostly Orange

At times you're up for adventure, but sometimes you like to sit back and watch—that's OK! You know your limits, and you like to stick to them. You might not be up for bungee jumping this week, but that doesn't mean you won't challenge yourself at school or in another setting.

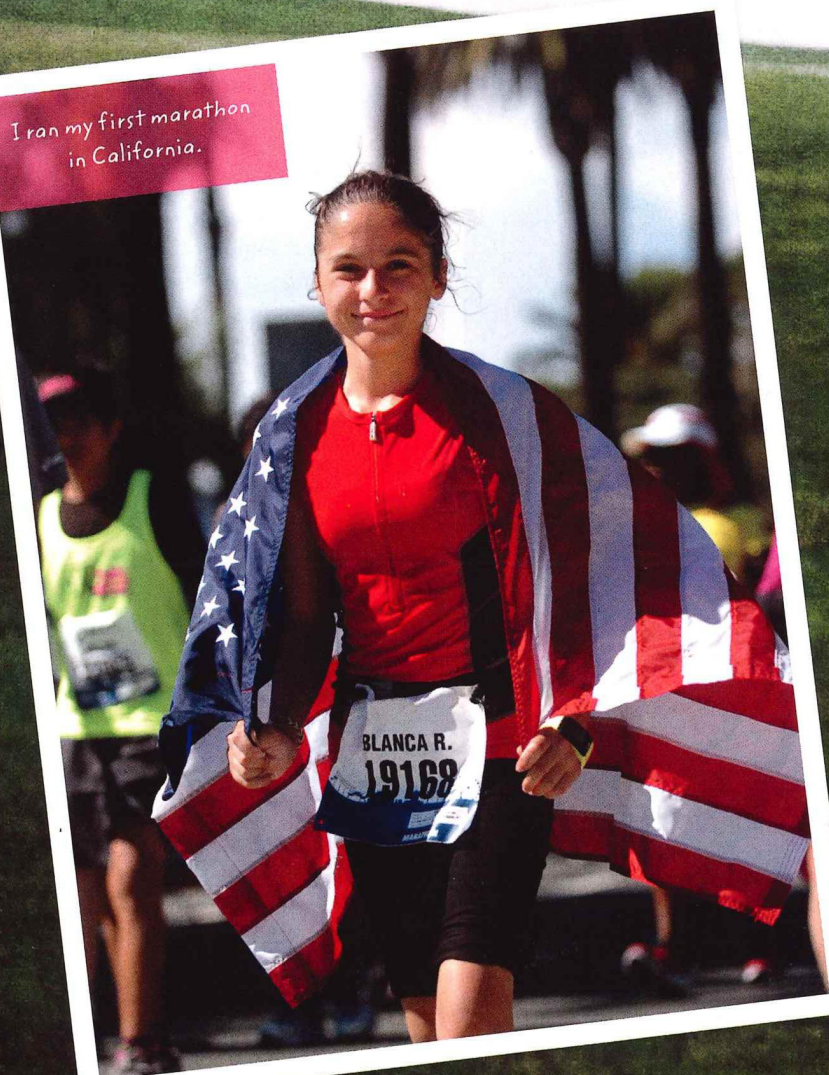
Mostly Green

You're not a huge fan of adventure, and you like to be comfortable and feel safe. These are great qualities, and you're always using your brain before you jump into something that doesn't feel quite right. Every once in a while it's OK to push yourself out of your comfort zone—you might make a new friend in the process! ★

She Ran the World

Blanca started racing . . . and ended up completing marathons on all seven continents.

I ran my first marathon in California.



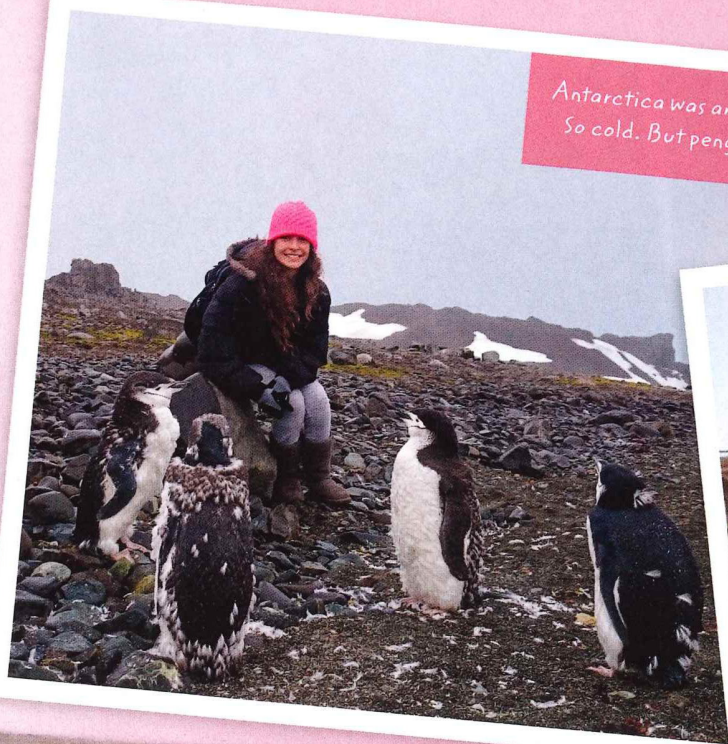
When I was 10 years old, my older sister and I read about the most amazing world record—a 14-year-old was the youngest girl ever to run marathons on all seven continents. Wow! I love to run, especially on my cross-country team at school. And I had always dreamed of traveling. Running marathons seemed like a great way to see the world.

That day, I thought, *I'm going to beat that world record and do it by the time I'm 12. Easy, right?*

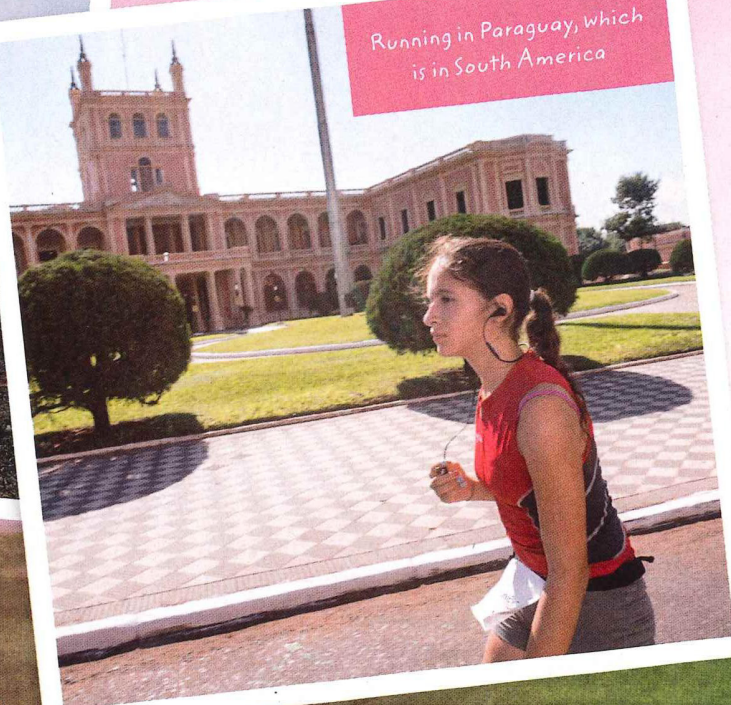
I talked to my dad about the idea. At first he thought I was joking. Then he thought it would be impossible. A marathon is a running race that's more than 26 miles long. When my dad realized I was serious, he suggested I start with a few local 5K runs (those are slightly longer than three miles). We did a few on the weekends—my dad, my little brother, and I. It was fun.

I didn't think I needed to train before a marathon. But my dad disagreed. My mom and I started running on a track at a high school near where we live—two miles a day. I started noticing new muscles on my legs. I got faster, and

Antarctica was amazing.
So cold. But penguins!



Running in Paraguay, which
is in South America



I could run farther without stopping. I felt good, and I pushed myself more and more.

My dad noticed the effort. He told me that he thought I could break that world record. That made me think, *Yeah, now I have to go and do this.* It wasn't just a crazy idea. I had faith in myself.

I increased my runs from two miles to four and five miles. It wasn't always easy to fit it in with school and homework, but I kept at it. Soon I ran a 10K race and then two half marathons close to home.

despite how hard it was, the marathon was fun. Tons of people cheered for me and encouraged me, even though I didn't even know them. Seeing the finish line was the best feeling. It looked really far away, but I put all my energy into it and just ran for it.

Afterward, my mom gave me flowers. I felt butterflies in my stomach. It was like my family believed in me, and then I went out and did it. Then we went out

It wasn't just a crazy idea. I had **faith** in myself.

Then I ran a real marathon in Los Angeles. It was not easy. Around mile 22, I wanted to give up. My legs hurt. My toes hurt. I was tired. I took walk breaks to get through. I didn't stop. My goal was to finish in less than four hours, but it took me more than six.

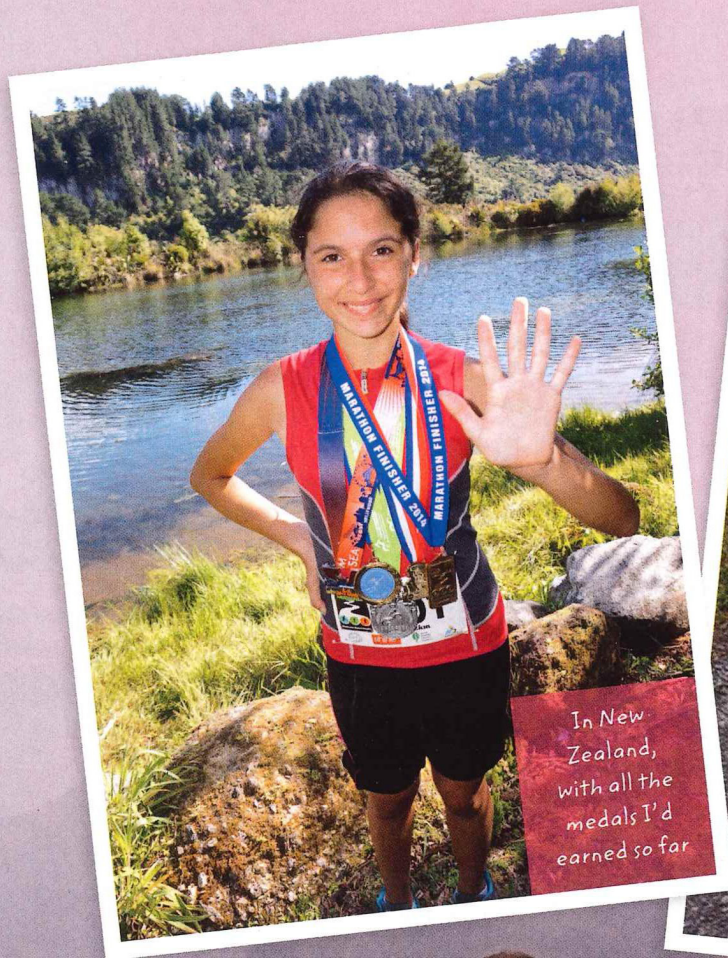
You might be wondering why I ever wanted to run another marathon. But,

for hamburgers.

My dad and I started researching marathons on the other six continents. Over the next 11 months, I juggled seventh grade and homework and also ran marathons in Rwanda, China, Paraguay, New Zealand, France, and Antarctica. I ran a lot of hills in Rwanda. In China, it was like running through a

This was the grassy
race course in China,
which is in Asia.





In New Zealand, with all the medals I'd earned so far.



Hello, Europe! Here I am running through France.

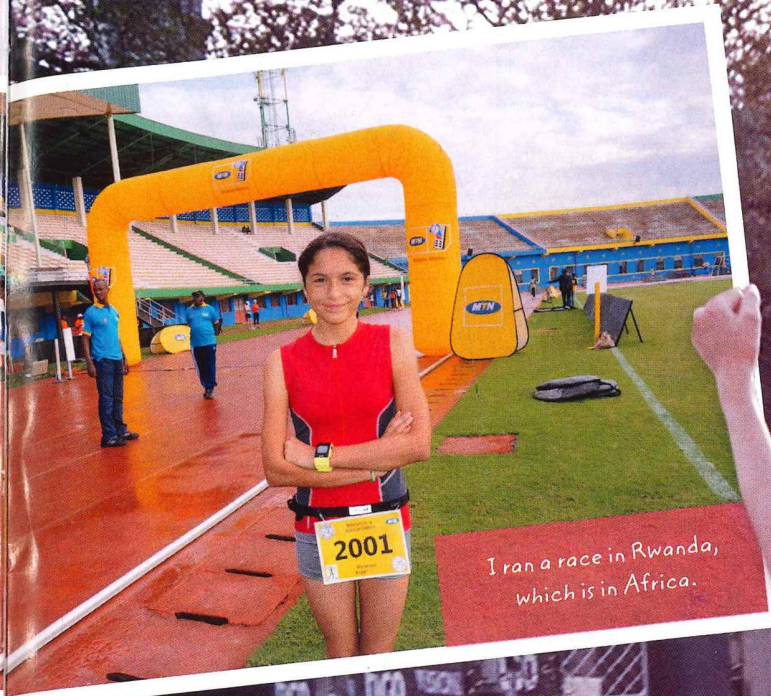


I visited the Great Wall of China during our Asia trip.

hot grassland. We ate a lot of eggs and pancakes there. At the race in Paraguay, the finish line was on a bridge overlooking a beautiful lake. It was so pretty—like a screen saver. New Zealand was the hardest to run with so many mountains and hills.

It felt great to reach my goal.

No matter where in the world I was, I sent pictures and texts to my teachers to share with my classmates. Even though my friends might have thought I was a little crazy, they have always encouraged me, even from far away.

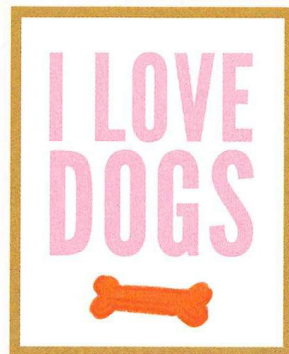
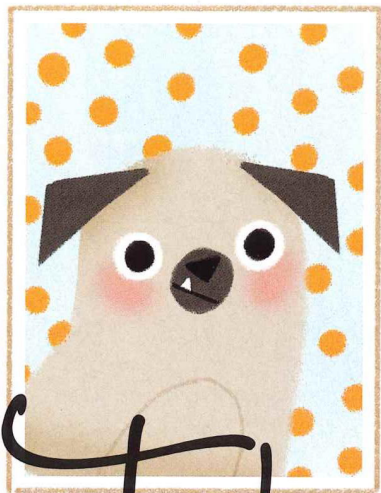


*I ran a race in Rwanda,
which is in Africa.*

Antarctica was my seventh continent. It was last February! It was so cold in our tent that I couldn't even hold a pencil to do my homework. I drank a lot of hot chocolate. To keep warm on race day, I wore three shirts, one sweater, and two pairs of pants under my running clothes. The race was muddy, cold, and icy, but the people were nice. I ran along a trail where I could see the ocean and glaciers in the distance. My dad was with me at almost every race. Seeing these amazing sights around the world seemed to mean a lot to him. He would get this look on his face and smile and say in his whole life he never thought he'd see a place like this. I loved sharing those moments with him.

Now, life is back to normal. It felt great to reach my goal in less than a year. I feel strong, and I feel good. And I'm so grateful to my family for helping me every step (or mile!) along the way. Now I'm in eighth grade. When I'm not doing homework, I love being outside. I love to draw, hang out with my friends, and go to the movies. I'm still running, too. It clears my head and helps me relax.

Recently, my little brother informed me that now he wants to break my world record! But I have a new goal: to run a marathon in each of the 50 United States. Wish me luck! ★



Taken By Surprise



Stephanie is excited for a surprise from her dad—as long as it’s a puppy!



BY CAROLYN MACKLER

The first time I heard a surprise was coming, I was excited. Who wouldn’t be? It was late July and I was sitting on the back porch of my dad’s house, licking the last drips of a cherry Popsicle and watching my little brother Jack dash back and forth through the sprinkler. The sun was hot on my shoulders and neck. My dad was inside making pasta salad with broccoli and shredded Parmesan, just the way I like it. Whenever I had a week at his house, he made me a batch of that pasta salad.

My parents had been divorced for five years. Sometimes people said they felt sorry for me because of that, but actually it was awesome. I hardly remembered when my mom and dad were together, so it wasn’t like I had anything to compare it to. Also, when I was at one of my parent’s houses, I had them all to myself. Well, Jack was there, too, but he was seven and either running around outside or playing with his Hot Wheels cars. My dad had a girlfriend, Bridget, but he usually got together with her when we were at my mom’s.

My dad came onto the porch with a spoon in his hand. “Stephanie,” he said. “The pasta salad is done, but I need a taster.”

I bit off the last of my Popsicle, set the wooden stick on the picnic table, and reached for the spoon. *Mmmmm . . . noodles, vinaigrette, veggies, cheese.*

“I love it,” I said. “It’s perfect.”

“Good,” my dad said. “I’ll put on a hot dog for Jack, and we’ll eat in a few minutes. It’s a little early, but we’re going to Bridget’s house this evening. We have something we want to talk about with you all.”

“Why?” I asked. I reached for the Popsicle stick and twirled it between my fingers. The wood was stained red from the cherry juice. At that point, I was thinking *you all* meant Jack and me. I wasn’t even thinking about Bridget’s kids, Haley and Conner. Haley was my age, and Conner was six. We got together with them sometimes, for movies or a swim at the community pool, but mostly Bridget’s weeks with her kids were the opposite of my dad’s weeks with us, so we rarely saw them.

“Well, it’s a surprise, but . . .” my dad said.

In that brief pause I realized that my dad was going to tell us we were getting a dog. I wanted a dog *sooo* badly. My mom was allergic to dogs, so my dad was my only hope. I’d been bugging him about a dog for an entire year, and he was caving in to the pressure. We’d even gone online a few weeks before and looked up family-friendly breeds.

“That is so exciting!” I squealed. “I’ve wanted this for so long. It’s finally happening!”

“What’s so exciting?” Jack shouted from the sprinkler. His chocolate-brown hair was plastered to his forehead.



My dad looked confused. “You’ve been *wanting* Bridget and me to get married?”

I stared at my dad. I was frozen in shock. I’d been hoping for a puppy, not a stepmother.

“We were planning to surprise all the kids tonight, but it sounds like you knew,” my dad said.

I broke the Popsicle stick in half, then in fourths. “No, I didn’t know. I thought the surprise was that we were getting a dog.”

My dad smiled. “Hopefully that’ll happen soon, too.”

“What’s so exciting, Stephanie?” Jack asked me again.

“Nothing,” I said, throwing the stick across the table. “Nothing at all.”

The next surprise came a month later. My dad and Bridget were having the wedding in November, over Thanksgiving weekend, and they wanted to find a way to involve all

four children. It was going to be a small ceremony, only family and close friends. Since Bridget’s daughter Haley and I were both ten, I said we were too old to be flower girls. I *really* didn’t want to be a flower girl. Haley was into the frilly stuff, so I bet she would have done it, but I was firm. No flower girl for me.

“We have a surprise,” Bridget said, tucking her straight blonde hair behind her ears.

We were at a restaurant for breakfast, but the pancakes hadn’t arrived yet. I took a sip of my cranberry juice and braced myself for whatever was coming next.

“We hope you’re as happy about this as we are,” my dad added, beaming at Bridget, Haley, and me.

My brother Jack and Bridget’s son Conner were in the bathroom together, no doubt having an epic battle with water and paper towels. The boys seemed to be bonding just fine. For Haley and me? Not so much.



"Conner and Jack will be the best men," my dad said.

"But they're six and seven," I said.

"Best *little* men," Bridget said, laughing.

"And you two will be my maids of honor."

Haley squealed and began bouncing up and down in the booth. "For real, Mom? For real?" She had a squeaky voice, even when she sneezed, which she'd been doing a lot of that morning. I reminded myself to squirt on hand sanitizer before I started eating.

"For real," Bridget said, taking Haley's and my hands and squeezing tight.

I bit the inside of my cheeks. Sure, I was happy that my dad was happy, and I liked Bridget just fine. But I wasn't sure I wanted to be her *maid of honor*.

"Steph, this is so exciting," Haley said to me.

"It's *Stephanie*," I said, easing my fingers away from Bridget and sitting on them.

Once the parents started talking to each other,

Haley turned to me.

"Can I at least call you Stephie?" she said. She stuck out her bottom lip like she was pleading. Ugh.

"Only Stephanie," I said. "Not Steph. Not Stephie. So stop asking."

"No need to be grumpy," Haley said, rolling her eyes.

It turned out I had good reason to be grumpy, because a few weeks later there was another surprise.

"We found something out today," my dad said, hanging up on a call with Bridget and sitting next to me on the couch. I set down my apple on the coffee table and looked up from the horse book I was reading. I loved horses almost as much as dogs, but obviously it wasn't realistic to ask for a pet horse. Jack was sprawled on the rug, wearing his Boy Scout uniform and flipping through a wilderness manual. He'd just joined the Boy Scouts, and my dad was an assistant troop leader.

"What did you find out?" I asked warily. The past few surprises hadn't exactly panned out. Also, maybe I was being paranoid, but when I found out the first surprise I was eating a *red* Popsicle. The second surprise came while I was drinking *red* colored juice. And here I was eating a *Red Delicious* apple! I decided then and there to quit all red foods.

"Bridget took Haley to the doctor because she's been sneezing and itching a lot and they wanted to look into allergies."

"O-kay," I said slowly. I wasn't sure what this had to do with me.

"It turns out Haley has become allergic to dogs. It comes as a major surprise because her dad has had a mutt for years. But now he's going to have to give their dog away."

"No," I whispered. My stomach was feeling cold and rumble. "That cannot be true. No way."



"I was **SURPRISED** to discover that we owned a lot of the same books and we both had a Magic 8-Ball."

"I know it's disappointing," my dad said, "but no dogs for us. We'll have the doctor test her for cats."

"I don't want a cat," I said. "I don't even like cats."

"That's not a great attitude, Stephanie," my dad said.

"I'm tired of all the surprises," I responded. I swallowed hard, trying to fend off tears. I couldn't believe we were never going to be able to get a dog.

"A Scout is never taken by surprise," my brother Jack said from across the living room. "A Scout knows what to do when the unexpected happens."

"I'm not a Boy Scout," I snarled at him.

"That's pretty obvious," Jack said, laughing.

For a while after that, the surprises settled down. My dad and Bridget got married.

Bridget and her kids moved into our house. Since Haley and Conner's week with their mom alternated with Jack's and my week with our dad, we were barely ever home at the same time. Conner moved into half of Jack's room and the boys were fine sharing their space. Mostly they were excited about pawing through each other's Hot Wheels collections. I was worried they'd be putting Haley in my room, but my dad told me that Haley was getting the guest room. Phew about that!

I never told anyone this, but when Haley wasn't

around I sometimes peeked into her room to see what kind of stuff she had. I was surprised to discover that we owned a lot of the same books and we both had a Magic 8-Ball and she had posters of dogs on her walls, which was strange because of her allergy.

On a random Tuesday evening in the middle of February, all of us happened to be home. It wasn't supposed to be our night with my dad, but my mom was working late so we came here. All six of us were around the dinner table. My dad and Bridget called us a *blended family*, but I preferred to say stepfamily. *Blended* sounded too cozy and comfortable.

"I'm glad everyone's here, because we have a surprise this weekend," my dad said, spooning sauce onto his spaghetti.

Bridget broke off a piece of garlic bread. "As you know, Valentine's Day is coming up. We've decided we're taking you all for an overnight. It's a long drive, but it'll be worth it."

"Ewww to Valentine's Day!" Conner said.

"Yeah," said Jack, his mouth full of garlic bread. "I hate romance."

"Not romance," my dad said. "It's a trip to celebrate the love in our newly blended family."

Haley didn't say a word. I didn't say a word either as I looked down at my plate. I was eating pasta with *red* sauce. I should have known.

Four days later, we were all in the minivan. The drive to this Valentine's Day overnight—whatever *that* meant—was taking forever. Like, hours. Haley and I were in the middle row. Conner and Jack were in their boosters in the row behind us. They were trading mini cars. Haley and I weren't saying much as we stared out our own windows. It was bleak and gray outside,

but there wasn't any snow. I glanced quickly over at Haley and wondered what she was thinking, but I had no idea. She still felt like a stranger.

"Mom?" Haley asked. "At this hotel, are we all staying in the same room?"

Oh. I hadn't even thought of that. I was glad that Haley asked.

"No," Bridget called back, "we're in a suite."

"A sweet?" Jack asked from the way back. By this point, he and Conner had ditched the cars and were burping and snorting and doing annoying things that little brothers do.

"No, dummy," I said to him. "A *suite*. As in, a few connected rooms."

"Don't call your brother that," my dad told me. Then he cleared his throat and said, "The kids will share one room and we'll share the other."

"We have to sleep in the same room as *them*?" I cried, gesturing at the boys. Now they were making farting sounds with their armpits.

"Doesn't sound so sweet, does it, Stephanie?" Haley said, smiling at me.

I had to laugh. "Definitely not a sweet suite," I said.

An hour later, the little brothers moaned that they were hungry.

"Perfect timing," Bridget said. "We're about to stop for a late lunch."

"Lunch?" I asked. It was after three o'clock. We'd eaten sandwiches in the minivan hours ago.

"I guess we could call it an early dinner," my dad said, winking back at me.

I looked over at Haley like, *Do you have any idea what's going on?* She just shrugged. I guess she was as confused as I was.

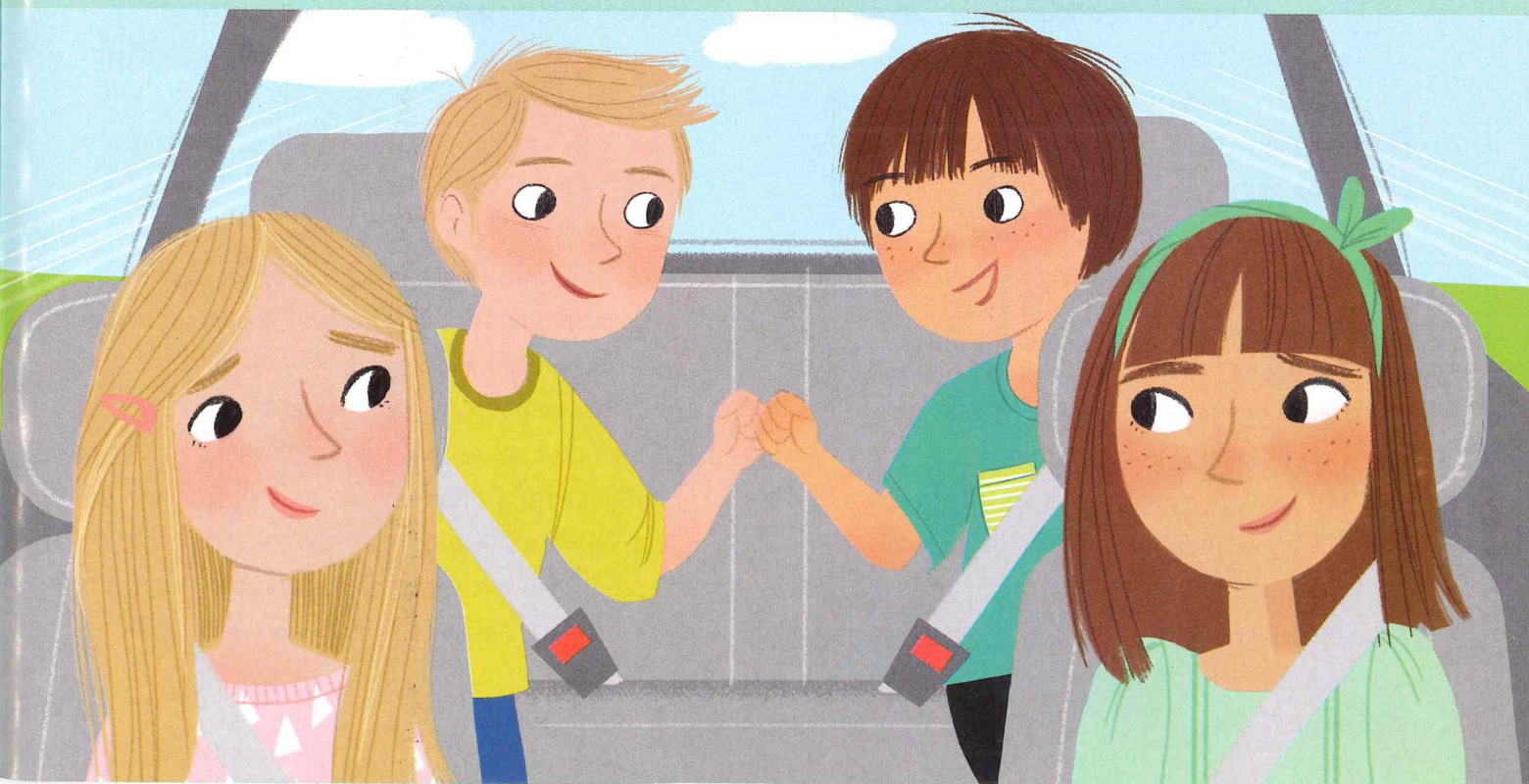
"Whatever," Haley said, shaking her head.

"Total whateverness," I said back to her.

When we got to the restaurant, there was a woman at the edge of the parking lot giving her dog a bowl of water. It was the cutest dog ever, mostly white with some flecks of rust on her nose.

"Can I pet her?" I asked.

"Of course," the woman said. "Do you like terriers?"



"Like?" I pulled off my glove and stroked the dog's ears. "I *love* all dogs. I want a dog more than anything in the world."

"You can pet her too," the woman said to Haley. That's when I realized that Haley was standing next to me, her arms crossed against her puffy jacket, frowning hard.

"I can't," she said quietly. "I'm allergic."

That, of course, reminded me that a dog is never going to happen. Not in a million years. I quickly followed my dad and brother into the restaurant.

"We have a special for Valentine's Day weekend," the waiter said as we settled around the table. "The kids are going to love this. We're serving all red food, all day long."

"Cool!" Conner shouted.

"Awesome!" Jack chimed in.

"All red?" I asked.

"Yep." The waiter glanced at the notepad in his hand. "Tomato soup. Pizza. Chili. Meatball subs. Pasta and red sauce, of course. Waffles topped with red berries . . ."

I moaned, burying my head in my hands.

To be safe, I ordered a waffle *without* the berries. Even so, as we were finishing our meal, my dad clapped his hands together and said, "Kids, we've got an exciting surprise for you."

As soon as he said that, my stomach began churning. I took a small sip of water and crunched hard on an ice cube.

"The thing is," my dad said, "we have one more place to go before we get to the hotel."

"I'm confused," I whimpered.

"Me too," Haley said in an equally desperate voice. "Can we please stop with the surprises?"

We smiled weakly at each other, and I suddenly felt a little bit better. Maybe this is what it meant

to have a blended family. Now I had a sister to go through all this *whateverness* with me.

"The reason we drove so far was—" my dad started.

"This trip is not really about a night in a hotel," Bridget cut in. "We *are* staying in a suite and they've made a special exception to let us stay there tonight."

"Tell us already!" Haley and I shouted at the same time.

"Tell us what?" Jack asked. He was wearing his Boy Scout cap. He took it off and began twirling it around his finger.

"There's a dog breeder right near this restaurant," my dad said. "We have an appointment with her in ten minutes. There's only one breeder like her in this half of the state."

"I'm confused," Haley said.

"I thought she can't—" I started to say.

"She breeds Portuguese water dogs," my dad said. "They are hypoallergenic. We've discussed it with Haley's allergy doctor, and she said it'd be okay. As a gift to our new blended family, we're going to pick out a puppy today. The puppy will sleep at the hotel with us tonight, and we will drive it home tomorrow."

"No!" all four of us shouted at the same time.

"Yes," my dad and Bridget responded.

There was a sign at the end of the long driveway that said Lucky Chance Breeders.

As we were pulling in, Jack said, "We could name the dog Lucky. That's nice, right?"

"Or Chance," Conner said.

"Or Valentine," Haley offered.

I couldn't even say anything. I was too excited to talk. I was so excited my teeth were chattering



and I was jiggling my knee up and down.

Inside the house, a woman with dark curly hair and paint-splattered overalls greeted my dad and Bridget and then led us to a large living room. In the middle of the floor, five of the most adorable black-and-white puppies were romping around, wrestling each other, and digging their tiny teeth into squeaky toys.

"These are the pups," she told us. "Why don't you kids take some time with them and see who you bond with?"

Immediately the four of us fell onto the rug and began playing with the puppies. They were beyond adorable, all fluffy with ruffled ears and wet black noses. Pretty soon, we noticed that one of the puppies kept coming back for kisses and hopping into our laps and licking our faces. An apron of white fur spread across his chest and belly. His breath smelled like dog chow, but in a good way.

"This is it," Haley said, nodding at me.

"Yep," I said. "This is Surprise."

"Surprise," Haley said. "What a perfect name."

"Boy Scouts are always ready for surprises," Jack said, and Conner gave him a high five.

"I don't know about *more* surprises," I said laughing. "But I'm definitely ready for this one." ★

Meet the Author



Carolyn Mackler

When I was nine, my mom called the animal shelter every day to see if they had the kind of dog we wanted. Finally, one day we got good news! We immediately fell in love with a little fuzzy one and named him Rascal.

This or That Critter Crazy

Would you rather ...

go back in time to
see dinosaurs

OR

travel with a monkey
to the moon?

be able to breathe
underwater like a fish

OR

change colors like
a chameleon?

turn into an eagle
for an hour

OR

an elephant
for a day?

hop like a frog for
a whole week

OR

gallop like a horse
for a month?

wear clothes with
zebra stripes

OR

leopard spots?

grow giant
giraffe legs

OR

a dolphin tail?

start a dog-
walking business

OR

feed ponies at
a stable?

have a bedroom that
looks like a giant
bird's nest

OR

a bear's den?

receive a Valentine's
Day card with a
hermit crab

OR

a walking stick
insect on it?

write with a pen
that buzzes

OR

a pencil that
hoots?

have a pet parrot that
repeats everything
you say

OR

a duck that follows
you everywhere
you go?

ride in a car that
looks like a bunny

OR

on a bike that
oinks like a pig?

YOU'RE
CUTE

YOU'RE
CUTE

Quack
♡



Mini Mag

With the Mini Mag, you can make a miniature copy of *American Girl* for your doll or stuffed animal. All you need are scissors and a stapler. Read the directions all the way through before you begin.

- 1.** Cut out each pair of pages only on the dotted lines. Be sure to cut around the tabs marked with the letters A, B, C, and D.



- 2. Stack the pages on top of one another in the order shown below, with the letters on the tabs facing up.**



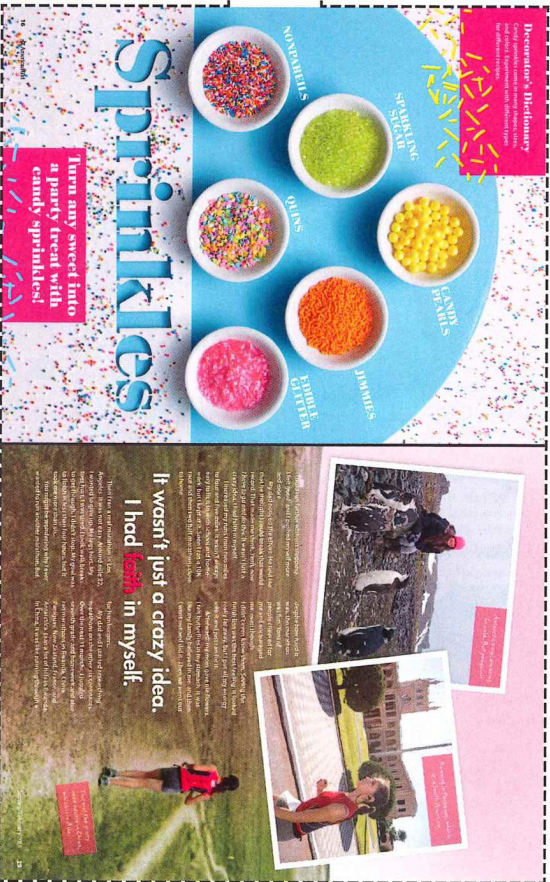
Continued (👉)

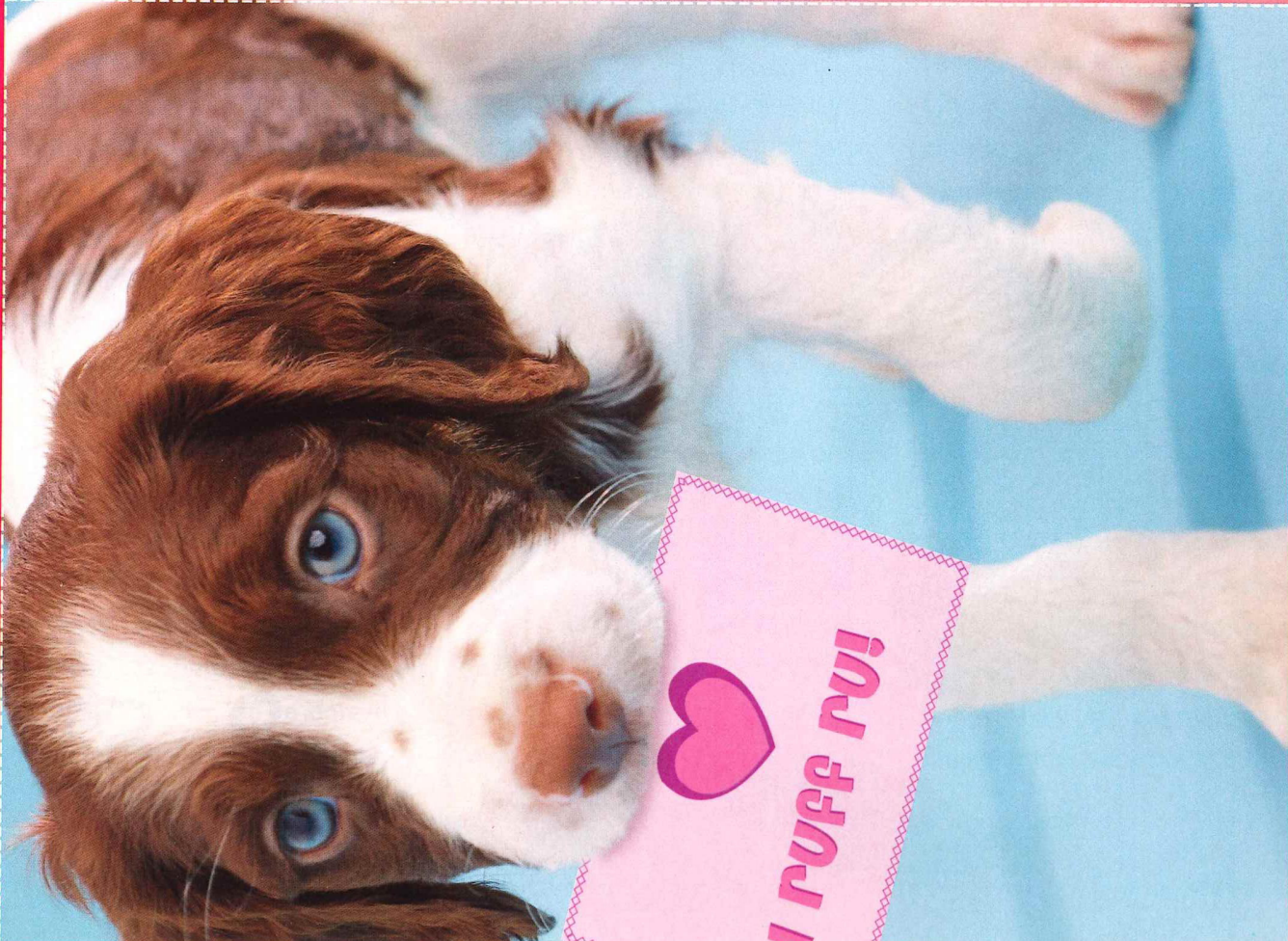
Mini Mag

3. Fold the stack of pages in half along the solid line in the center. The cover of the magazine should now be on top. Run your fingernail down the folded edge to help the pages lie flat.



4. Open the folded stack. Staple along the center line. Cut off the tabs, and you're done!





★ American Girl®

Copyright © 2016 American Girl. All rights reserved. All American Girl marks are trademarks of American Girl.

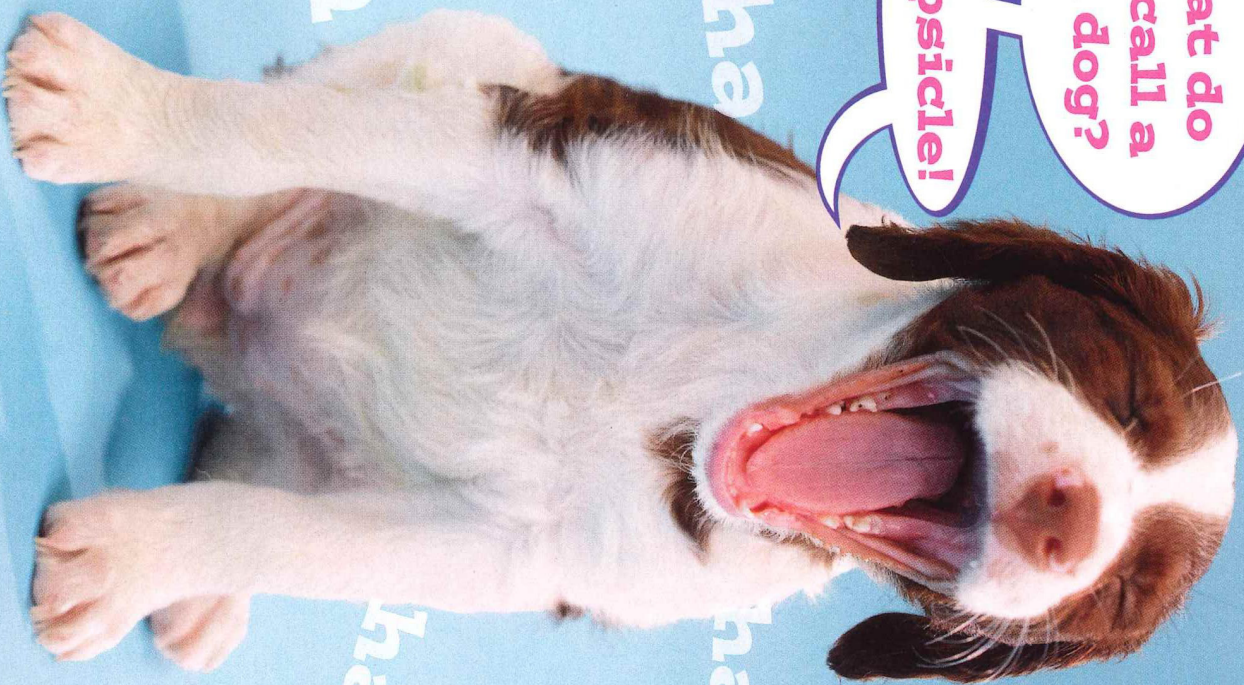


★ American Girl®

Copyright © 2016 American Girl. All rights reserved. All American Girl marks are trademarks of American Girl.

What do
you call a
cold dog?

A pupsicle!



I'm going to
paws for a
second.



☆ American Girl®

Copyright © 2016 American Girl. All rights reserved. All American Girl marks are trademarks of American Girl.

☆ American Girl®

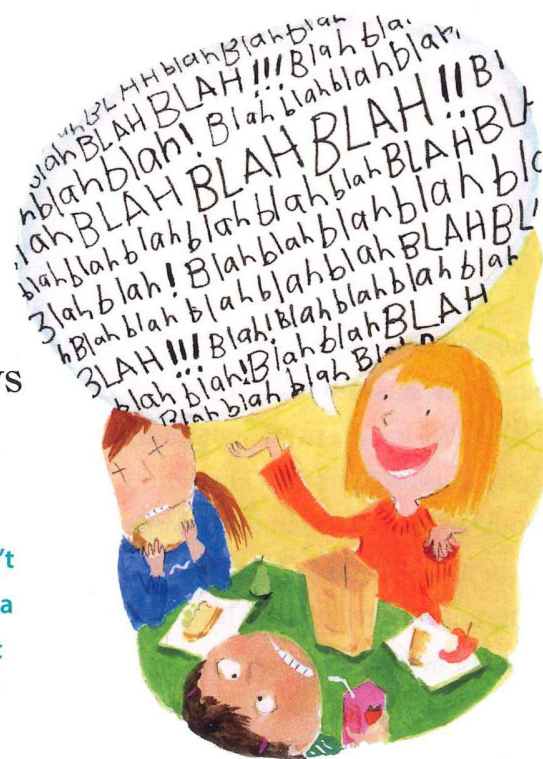
Copyright © 2016 American Girl. All rights reserved. All American Girl marks are trademarks of American Girl.

HELP!

Dear American Girl,

One of my friends talks too much. Once she gets going, she never stops, and what she says is so random. We try to listen politely, but . . . How do I tell her nicely to stop?

Some people are chatty. And you're right—interrupting someone isn't polite. But if a person talks on and on, never letting others be part of a conversation, that's rude, too. When this happens, it's OK to interrupt gently. "Ha, that's hilarious! Something like that happened to me . . ." Your friend might simply need a distraction to help her take a break.



Dear American Girl,

I haven't seen my friend in two years, and she's coming to visit! But I feel like I don't know her anymore. What should I do?

Problems

You and your friend aren't the same girls who said good-bye two years ago. But that's not a bad thing! As you get to know your friend again, try not to compare her with the past. Instead, have fun learning all the new things that make her *her*. It also might put your mind at ease to text or video-chat before her visit. So when you see her, it'll be more like meeting a friend than a stranger.



Dear American Girl,

I got caught listening to music at night, and my mom took away my MP3 player. How can I get my music back?

How do I deal?

It sounds as if you broke a house rule, which means you've got a trust problem with your mom and will have to fix it. But you can also pick a calm time to talk to her about why you enjoy music at night—whether it helps you to relax or to block out other noise. Listen to her reasons for not wanting you to have your player at night, and try to work out a compromise. Good luck.



Dear American Girl,

I just got my ears pierced! The earrings can't be taken out for a long time, but I'm worried they'll fall out while I sleep!

pierced worries

Here's some good news: The special earrings you get for new piercings have backs on them that don't come off easily. They're designed to stay on *especially* when you're sleeping. Still, to make yourself feel better, start a habit of cleaning and checking your earrings before you go to bed and right when you get up. That will help put your mind at ease and keep your piercings healthy.



MORE HELP!

Dear American Girl,

Scary movies and TV shows TERRIFY me. I am so sensitive that I once watched an alien movie and woke up in the middle of the night crying. This happens a lot. How can I be brave and get some sleep?

Scaredy Cat

For some people, getting scared is fun. For others, it's a bad experience, not just at the time but for days (and nights) afterward. Your problem isn't that you're not brave. More likely, it's that you have a lively imagination and a sensitive personality. Those qualities are awesome, but they also allow you to hang onto scary images, which can upset you again and again. The best thing to do is to shield yourself from things you know will bother you. Shut off the video. Turn the channel or the page. And come up with random happy thoughts (a beloved book, a park, a pile of sleeping kittens) to think about when bad images appear. Be sure to tell a parent about sleep troubles you may have.



Dear American Girl,

My class went on a field trip to a science center, where I spent half my allowance on a souvenir. On the bus ride back, my friend played with it and tangled it up. Now it's worthless! Should I be mad at her or not?

field-trip friend

It's OK to be upset—after all, your stuff got ruined! But if your friend didn't mean to wreck your souvenir,



then it was an accident. There's no reason to blow up a friendship over an accident, so forgive your friend. But keep valuable items put away at school or on the bus so this doesn't happen again.



Dear American Girl,

I'm outgrowing my best friend, but I don't know how to tell my mom. She thinks we still do everything together, but the truth is, we hardly ever talk. My mom keeps asking if I want to invite her over.

how to tell?

Sometimes it's hard to know how to bring up a sensitive subject, such as a fading friendship. But when your mom understands what's going on, she may stop asking. The truth is, friendships can shift over time. Right now, you aren't feeling close to your friend, but that could change. If you have a long and strong enough history with this girl, it might be worth hanging out with her every so often to keep up the friendship.





Dear American Girl,

Everyone at school calls me “the Chinese girl.” Don’t get me wrong—I’m really proud of my Chinese heritage. It’s just . . .

ARGHH!

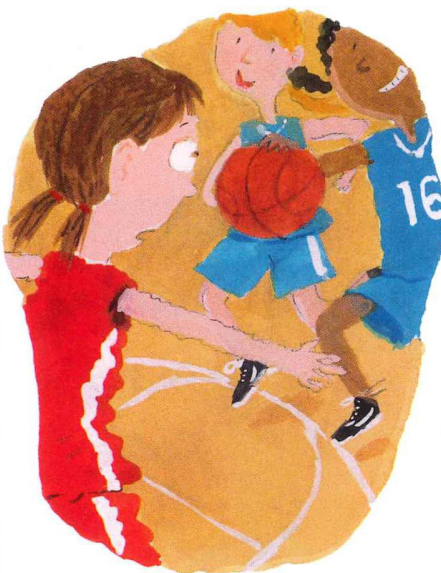
Whenever someone calls you any name, it’s fine to say, “Please don’t call me that” or “I have a NAME.”

But you might need some help from a teacher or other trusted adult to make this stop. Think about these name-callers. Is it people being mean and bullying you? Or is it people who don’t understand that it’s not OK to call a person a name based on her heritage? Let the teacher or adult know what kind of name-calling this is—that will help him or her figure out the best way to solve this problem.



Dear American Girl,

I HATE gym. I’m in a class with super sporty and competitive people, and it’s not fun. Should I join a team to try to get better, or should I just not care? Rather be in library!!



Try to care. It’s important to do your best in all parts of school, including the ones you don’t love.

Exercise is important, but that doesn’t mean you have to buy into the competitive part. Focus on the fitness side of gym class, and enjoy that. Also, try to find a friend with similar abilities to stick close to. And it wouldn’t hurt to talk to your gym teacher: “I’m not great at this, but I want you to know that I’m trying.”



Dear American Girl,

I want to start a business tie-dying shirts. The problem is, my parents won’t buy me the materials. I’m helping my grandma organize her house for \$5 an hour, but I’m tired of waiting!
money problems

Getting cash can take time, but figuring out how to be smart and careful about money is a good business skill to learn. Keep helping your grandma. Your earnings will add up slowly but steadily. When you finally have enough saved to start your business, it will be something you can be extra proud of—because you built it through your own hard work.



Advice from You

“If you have two friends who are arguing, the worst thing you can do is get in the middle of it. Try to stay out of the fight, and definitely don’t take sides.”

Caroline K.
Age 10, Connecticut

Need advice? Got advice? Write:
Help!

American Girl magazine
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562

We can’t respond to all letters.
But we read everything you send!

Here are some
sweet sprinkle
photos!



Bel loved
running straight
at the camera.
She kept trying
to nibble it!

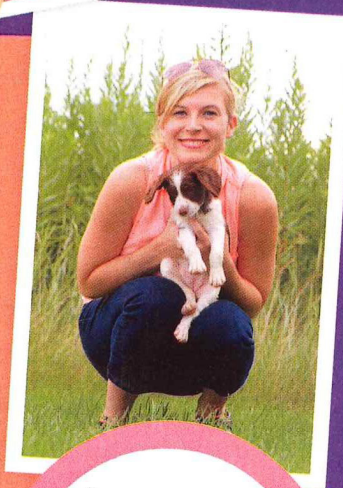


Our cover model
Camryn couldn't
stop laughing
during our
photo shoot!



Behind the Scenes

This issue was
sprinkled with love
and puppy kisses.



Melissa is one of our
magazine editors! She
brought in her puppy,
Bel, for a magazine
poster photo shoot.
Ruff!

Our design team
created real pillows
based on the
submissions from our
contest winners.
Sew cute!



Are you up for
a laugh, too? Visit
[americangirl.com/
playmagazine](http://americangirl.com/playmagazine) for
more "This or That"
questions!





Maryellen

LARKIN™

Experience the nifty '50s with Maryellen through her books, doll collections, special events, online games, and more!



Visit an American Girl store near you, call **800-845-0005**, or go to **americangirl.com**.

Must be at least 18 years of age to purchase online.

American Girl

Illustrations: Carol Yoshizumi

Coming up in the March issue of *American Girl* magazine

Dreamy Decor

Take this quiz to discover your decorating style.

Say Cheese!

We've got some great photography tips for you.

Cute Cake

You'll love this delicious dessert.

Snip, snip!

Get the perfect haircut.



For more fun
and games, go to
americangirl.com/playmagazine



AG'S VALENTINE STICKERS



Illustrations: Emily Bussey

XOXO LOVE Be mine

happy valentine's day



I LOVE U

FRIENDS 4 EVER



BEST BUDS kisses

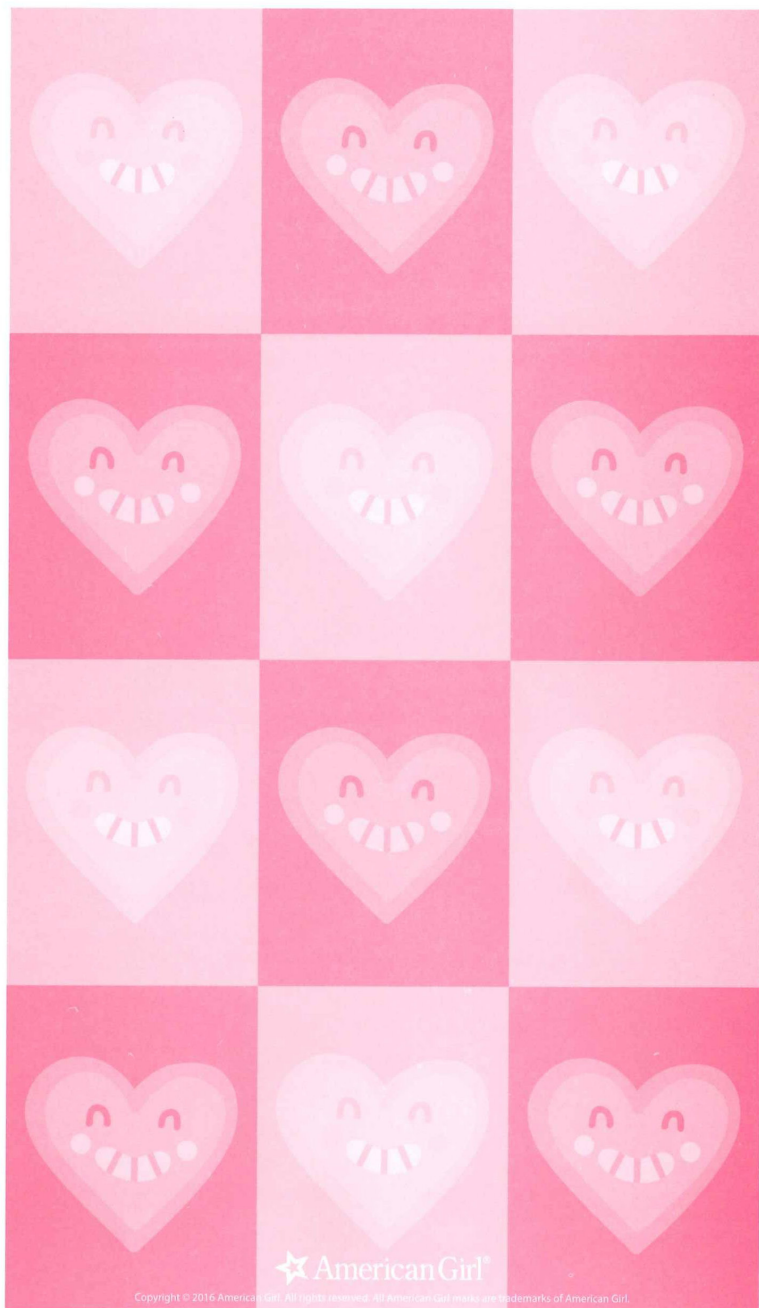
BE MY VALENTINE

Love happy hearts day

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY

kisses HAPPY HUGS DAY

me + you = friends 4-ever



American Girl

Copyright © 2016 American Girl. All rights reserved. All American Girl marks are trademarks of American Girl.



Use these designs for your valentines!

Follow the steps on pages 24 and 25 to make pop-up cards; then decorate them with these stickers. If you use envelopes, seal each one with a sticker—and a kiss!

Sweet Sign-Offs

At a loss for words? Use some of these sayings in your pop-up cards.

If friends were flowers, I'd pick you.

You sparkle and shine, Valentine.

True blue—that's you!

Our friendship keeps on blooming!

We're two peas in a pod.

You make life sweet!





Just for YOU!

American Girl magazine is packed
with everything girls love.

☐ **Yes!** I want to get *American Girl* magazine.

1 year (6 issues in all) **\$24.95** Save \$10.75!

☐ Bill me ☐ Payment enclosed



Send bill to: (please print)

Adult's name (required)

Address

City

State

Zip

Adult's e-mail address

Send magazine to: (please print)

Girl's name

Girl's birth date (optional)

Address

City

State

Zip

*** View a FREE sample of our magazine online at americangirlmagazine.com ***

Guarantee: You may cancel at any time and receive a full refund for all unserved issues. Allow 4-6 weeks for delivery of your first issue. All non-US addresses \$29 U.S. per year, prepaid only. Savings based on newsstand price of \$35.70 for six issues. To learn more about *American Girl* magazine or remove your name from our mailing list, please call 800-234-1278. ©/™ 2016 American Girl. H47QWA

Subscribe & Save

on *American Girl* magazine



☐ **1 year** (6 issues) **\$24.95**. I save \$10.75 off the cover price.

☐ **2 years** (12 issues) **\$39.95**. I save \$31.45 off the cover price—**that's like getting five issues FREE.**

Send bill to: (please print)

☐ Bill me ☐ Payment enclosed

Send magazine to: (please print)

Adult's name (required)

Girl's name

Girl's birth date (Optional)

Address

Address

City

State

Zip

City

State

Zip

*** View a FREE sample of our magazine online at americangirlmagazine.com ***

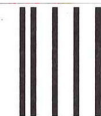


Keep the fun coming all year long.
Mail this card today!

Guarantee: You may cancel at any time and receive a full refund for all unserved issues. Allow 4-6 weeks for delivery of your first issue. All non-US addresses \$29 US per year, prepaid only. Savings based on newsstand price of \$35.70 for six issues. To learn more about *American Girl* magazine or remove your name from our mailing list, please call 800-234-1278. ©/™ 2016 American Girl. H47QWA



J61SPMM1



NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 190 BOONE IA

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE



Magazine Subscription Dept

PO BOX 5532

HARLAN IA 51593-3032



J61SBMM1



NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 190 BOONE IA

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE



Magazine Subscription Dept

PO BOX 5532

HARLAN IA 51593-3032

